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Bobby Baker's Auto Identification Is Under Wraps

Hill Car Gets Hush-Hush Tags

By JULIAN MORRISON

Senate Majority Secretary Robert G. (Bobby) Baker's Government-provided 1962 Mercury bears a license plate number which is under the strictest security wraps.

Mr. Baker today said, "I never had anything to do" with putting the car in the security file. He said he didn't know who had.

The District Department of Motor Vehicles refuses to disclose the ownership of the Mercury because "it belongs to a security-type agency."

The General Services Administration, which must approve the placing of a license in the "security file", also refuses to say why Mr. Baker's

car is so classified or who asked for the classification.

Mr. Baker is one of several Senate officials who are provided automobiles for "official use."

The others include Senate Secretary Felton Johnston, Sergeant At Arms Joseph Duke and Senate physician Dr. George Calver. Their cars have the much-sought-after low tag numbers issued to VIP's here by the District Government—all of which are published annually by The Washington Daily News and are readily available to members of the public.

According to the GSA, approval for undercover tags is normally limited to agencies doing undercover, investigative work, such as the FBI, the CIA, the Atomic Energy

Commission, the Defense Department, security agencies, and certain Metropolitan Police and Fire Department cars.

The GSA says, however, that certain "additional exemptions may be authorized in the public interest when conspicuous identity would interfere with the purpose for which the vehicle is acquired and used."

These exceptions, the GSA says, are made only upon a "statement by the responsible people of the operating agency" that a traceable tag would be contrary to the public interest.

Mr. Baker said he didn't know who would have written the letter to the GSA asking that the license plates be kept secret.

A GSA official yesterday

would not comment on what public interest is being served by its authorization to put Mr. Baker's car registration under lock and key.

Newspaper interest in Mr. Baker's activities was spurred recently when a local vending machine company charged in a suit that he, the vice-president of a second vending company holding extensive aerospace industry contracts, and a local "consultant" for North American Aviation Corp. had conspired to cancel the complaining firm's contract with the Falls Church electronics firm of Melpar, Inc.

Yesterday, lawyers for Serv-U and the other defendants received a two week extension from District Court Judge Edward Tamm in the time allowed them to file an answer to the suit.